



**U.S. Department of Justice**

*United States Attorney*

*Southern District of Florida*

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**NEWS RELEASE:**

**DEFENDANT PLEADS GUILTY TO CONSPIRING**

**TO EXPORT MILITARY AIRCRAFT PARTS TO IRAN**

R. Alexander Acosta, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Florida, Michael Johnson, Special Agent in Charge, U.S. Department of Commerce, Office of Export Enforcement, Anthony V. Mangione, Special Agent in Charge, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Office of Investigations, and Sharon Woods, Director, U.S. Department of Defense, Defense Criminal Investigative Service, announced that defendant **Hassan Saied Keshari** and his corporation, **Kesh Air International**, pled guilty this morning in Miami to charges of conspiring to illegally export military and commercial aircraft parts to Iran. Keshari appeared on behalf of himself and Kesh Air International in federal court today to announce their guilty pleas. Charges are still pending against two remaining defendants charged in the indictment, **Traian Bujduveanu** and his corporation, **Orion Aviation Corp.** Sentencing is scheduled for April 8, 2009 at 8:30 a.m. before U.S. District Judge Patricia A. Seitz.

Count 1 of the Indictment, to which Keshari and Kesh Air International pled guilty, charges conspiracy to export and cause the export of goods from the United States to the Islamic Republic Iran, in violation of the Embargo imposed upon that country by the United States and in violation of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, Title 50, United States Code, 1705(a), and to export and cause to be exported defense articles, in violation of the Arms Export Control Act, Title 22, United States Code, Section 2778(b), all in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 371. On the conspiracy count, Hassan Saied Keshari faces a maximum statutory term of (5) years' imprisonment and a



maximum fine of \$250,000. Kesh Air International faces a statutory maximum fine of \$500,000.

According to documents filed with the court during the plea hearing, Keshari, an Iranian national and naturalized United States citizen, by and through his Novato, California, corporation, Kesh Air International, purchased aircraft parts on behalf of purchasers in Iran and exported the aircraft parts to Iran by way of freight forwarders in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. The military aircraft parts were purchased from a supplier in Broward County, defendant Traian Bujduveanu, who operated through his Broward County business, defendant Orion Aviation Corp. Among the aircraft parts illegally exported to Iran through the conspiracy were parts designed exclusively for the F-14 Fighter Jet, the Cobra AH-1 Attack Helicopter, and the CH-53A Military Helicopter. All of these aircraft are part of the Iranian military fleet, while the F-14 is known to be used exclusively by the Iranian military.

Moreover, all of the parts supplied by Keshari as part of the conspiracy are manufactured in the United States, are designed exclusively for military use, and have been designated by the United States Department of State as "defense articles" on the United States Munitions List, thus requiring registration and licensing with the Department of State, Directorate of Defense Trade Controls. Neither Keshari nor his co-defendants are registered or had the required licenses to ship defense articles to Iran.

According to the Indictment and documents filed with the court during the plea hearing, Keshari received orders by email from buyers in Iran for specific aircraft parts. Keshari then requested quotes, usually by e-mail, from Bujduveanu and other suppliers and made arrangements for the sale and shipment of the parts to a company in Dubai through the use of false or misleading shipping documents. From Dubai, the parts were then shipped on to the purchasers in Iran.

Keshari has been in federal custody since his arrest in June 2008 and will remain in custody pending his sentencing. Co-defendant Bujduveanu also remains in federal custody awaiting trial, which is scheduled for May 2009.

Mr. Acosta commended the investigative efforts of the U.S. Department of Commerce, Office of Export Enforcement, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Office of Investigations, and the U.S. Department of Defense, Defense Criminal Investigative Service, for their work on this investigation. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Melissa Damian.